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ACTIVITIES WITHIN SCHOOL SYSTEM IN CHINA,
JANUARY - JUNE 1953

[Summary: The Second National Conference of Educational Workers which opened in Peiping on 5 June 1953 was attended by government officials from all parts of the country and by some primary teachers from North China.

More than 1,300 elementary teachers met in Ch'eng-tu, Szechwan Province, 22 December 1952 - 11 January 1953, for a conference on ideological reform within the educational system.

The North China Committee of Culture and Education is sending out survey teams this spring to study the elementary school system.

Pursuant to the Central People's Government directive, the Northeast Propaganda Bureau held a conference in Northeast China Administrative Area from 12 - 16 May to consider the teaching of theory to cadres.

Official interferences by Communist authorities in Kwangtung have disrupted school programs.⁷

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OUTLINES FUTURE EDUCATIONAL AIMS -- Peiping, Jen-min Jih-pao, 6 Jun 53

The Second National Conference of Educational Workers which opened in Peiping on 5 June 1953 was attended by government officials from all parts of the country and by some primary teachers from North China.

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The central theme of the conference was to discuss the problem of elementary education. The agenda also included discussions of the aims of general and normal school education, improvement of elementary schools, enrollment in middle and normal schools, etc.

The keynote speech was made by Kuo Mo-jo, chairman of the Committee of Culture and Education of the Central People's Government, who said in part:

"This conference is both necessary and timely in view of the nation's embarking on planned economic construction which is dependent upon the schools to provide trained technicians. The emphasis in the total educational picture is on higher education. General education is the foundation. In general education, the emphasis is on improvement of the senior middle school which prepares a reserve of reconstruction workers. The next point of emphasis is to see that all levels of senior normal school prepare teachers to teach these reserve reconstruction workers.

"To realize the motto of the Central People's Government, 'Be firm in reform, emphasize growth, ensure quality, advance steadily,' education must fight individualism, conservatism, and the short-sighted viewpoint. Every government office must fight the tendency of bureaucratism."

Kuo was followed by Minister of Education Chang Hsi-jo, who stated, "The immediate task is to overcome the lack of correlation between education and reconstruction, and the lack of coordination within education itself. Senior middle schools, and senior normal schools must provide teachers to aid in solving these problems. Elementary and junior middle schools, as well as colleges and universities, need strengthening rather than expansion."

IDEOLOGICAL REFORM OF SZECHWAN ELEMENTARY TEACHERS -- Canton, Nan-fang Jih-pao, 15 Apr 53

From 22 December 1952 to 11 January 1953, more than 1,300 elementary teachers gathered in Ch'eng-tu, Szechwan Province, for a conference on ideological reform within the educational system.

Before the conference opened the Szechwan Provincial Party Committee of the Chinese Communist Party appointed work teams in model areas to investigate thoroughly the problems of elementary education and to determine how adequately the teachers are carrying out the ideological reform. These work teams uncovered carelessness and the frequent transfer of teachers that resulted in anxiety among the teachers about tenure. On the positive side, the investigation did show that the majority of teachers were progressive and pro-Communist.

During the conference itself, the leading cadres discussed the various problems of educational work. They began with self-examinations. The state of confusion prevalent in the elementary school system was discussed and many suggestions for improvement were made.

Various party leaders addressed the conference, stressing the role the teachers must play in the nation's rebirth, and discussing the party's policy toward intellectuals. As a result, the delegates now realize the importance of their duties in national cultural rehabilitation. Twenty-nine Ch'eng-tu delegates vowed life-long devotion to education. One hundred and forty-one applied for membership in the party and 341 applied for entrance into the New Democracy Youth Corps.

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SURVEY OF NORTH CHINA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS -- Canton, Nan-fang, Jih-pao,
15 Apr 53

The Committee of Culture and Education of the North China Administrative Committee has already sent out 106 cadres to carry on investigative work in the elementary schools. The cadres who went to Hopeh Province helped the Hopeh Cultural and Education Committee and at the same time aided the labor unions. Cadres also did experimental reform work in elementary schools in Tung Hsien and Hau-shui in Hopeh Province.

These cadres will continue to be sent to various places to do investigative work, to carry on the struggle against bureaucracy, and to improve the quality of teaching methods. Attention also will be given to the wages and working conditions of employees other than teachers within the school system, to the ages of the children, and to the health of the children when they enter school. Each team of cadres will spend 2-3 months in this work.

CCP STRESSES TEACHING THEORY TO CADRES -- Tientsin, Ta Kung Pao, 6 Jun 53

Peiping, 5 June -- Pursuant to a directive of the Central People's Government, the Northeast Propaganda Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party held a conference in the Northeast Administrative Area 12 - 16 May to consider the teaching of theory to cadres. The conference was attended by 71 representatives of propaganda agencies in the area.

The opening address was given by Li Cho-jan, chief of the Northeast Propaganda Bureau. He said, "Because China is entering an era of vast economic construction, all cadres must study the theory and practice of Soviet socialist economic reconstruction. A new wave of enthusiasm among party cadres would mean much for China's transformation. Cadres must make the most of this opportunity for study."

Summing up the 5-day discussion, Liu Tzu-tsai, deputy director of the Northeast Propaganda Bureau, stressed the need for trained teachers and leaders. He recommended special arrangements for those cadres who must combine study with regular duties. He said: "Leadership must be stressed among a core of higher cadres in order that they may guide the lower cadres. Everything must be in readiness for this work-study plan to be launched by 1 July."

From 20 - 28 May 1953, the Central-South China Propaganda Bureau held a similar conference in Central-South China. The conference discussed the cadre training program which was first started in the autumn of 1952. Under this program over 370,000 cadres in Central-South China Administrative Area have been receiving instruction from 3,381 teachers in 43 political schools. The conference decided that in the future one teacher should be provided for every 500-1,000 cadres, that schools on Marxism-Leninism and party principles should be set up in many places, and that the study should be more systematized and under Communist Party supervision.

OFFICIAL INTERFERENCE DISRUPTS SCHOOL PROGRAM IN KWANGTUNG -- Canton, Nan-fang Jih-pao, 11 Apr 53

The Communist authorities in Tung-kuan, Kwangtung, have been drafting students and teachers for outside work. This has interfered with the school program. The following examples can be cited:

1. In September 1952, 140 primary teachers and 20 middle school students in Tung-kuan were taken out of school for 1½ months to aid in overhauling the hsien fiscal system. This caused confusion in the schools and led to the reduction of scheduled classes.

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2. In the past many teachers have been drafted for bookkeeping work for summer and fall tax collection. This has generally consumed a total of 35 days and although many teachers were forced to work far into the night and became ill, they dared not refuse the assignment.

3. To popularize the new marriage law the government has often mobilized pupils and teachers to form wedding processions. On one occasion, the government interrupted a school's winter examination schedule to get up a parade to welcome a bridegroom.

4. On another occasion, teachers were forced by the militia to clean and whitewash government buildings and barracks; this was done on the grounds that teachers were public servants.

5. Teachers are often drafted to write public documents. In fact, many schools are required to keep on hand a team of "mobile instructors" to meet such emergencies.

School buildings are requisitioned for meetings, exhibits, grain storage, etc. Thus, classes are often forced to meet elsewhere and as a result schools are able to complete only half their class schedule.

Similar encroachments on the schools are reported from Ch'ao-an where many teachers are being drafted to help fix farm production quotas. For days children are left without instruction. Peasant unions as well as local officials in Ch'ao-an place little importance on educational work.

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